

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game and for generating a video game display having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video game program,

each of said plurality of game cards recording for an associated character depicted, at least identification data of the associated character and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character and for causing a change to a video image involving an animated and displayed associated character dependent on the progress of said video game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards; and

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards being operable to animate and display a video display visually portraying said associated character and for processing ~~a~~the video game program of the video game to cause the change to the video image involving said animated and displayed character by using said characteristic data; and

at least a portion of a video game program to be added to the video game program stored by the video game information storage medium is obtained from at least one of the plurality of game cards.

2-6. (canceled).

7. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein said game cards are trading cards each including a figure of a character differing in rarity value.

8. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein the characteristic data recorded on at least one of said game cards includes sound data related to at least the associated character, and

wherein said processing system generates sound of the associated character on the basis of sound data read by said external information reading circuitry.

9. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein the characteristic data recorded on at least one of said game cards includes text data explaining an individual feature of the associated character, and

wherein said processing system displays text data read by said external information reading circuitry on a game screen.

10. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are optically readably recorded on said game cards using a two-dimensional array of dots, and

wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards.

11. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are electronically readably recorded in a non-volatile memory, and

wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a reader for electrically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters stored in said non-volatile memory of said game cards.

12. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein at least the identification data and characteristic data of the characters are magnetically recorded in a magnetic recording area formed in one surface of said game cards, and

wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded in the magnetic recording area of said game cards.

13. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game providing video game play having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of collection cards, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data relating to said character including recorded data enabling animation and display of the character;

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program to display at

least some of the characters portrayed on said collection cards on a video image display device;

a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute the video game program;

wherein at least one of the collection cards visually portrays a character previously stored in the video game information storage medium and records data relating to the previously stored character including an identification code of the previously stored character and characteristic data of the previously stored character;

wherein at least another one of said collection cards ~~includes~~ visually displays a particular character ~~other than a character not previously stored in said video game information storage medium and includes display data recorded thereon for animating and displaying a figure of the particular character in an animated manner on the video image display device, an identification code of the particular character and characteristic data of the particular character,~~

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine further comprises external information reading circuitry for reading the identification code and characteristic data recorded on said at least one and said at least another one of the collection cards,

said processing system being operable to

execute the video game program based on the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium in such a manner so as to, when the identification code and characteristic data of the ~~particular previously stored~~ character are not supplied by said external information reading circuitry, and to change a state of the previously stored character by adding the characteristic data supplied by the external reading circuitry to other characteristic data of the previously stored character; and

execute the video game program and process the character data of the particular

character, when supplied with the identification code and characteristic data of the particular character read from said external information reading circuitry, ~~and process the display data of the particular character to animate and display the character during the game~~ to animate and display an image of the particular character as a new character.

14. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 13, wherein the characteristic data stored on said at least one of the collection cards and said at least another one of the collection cards includes sound data respectively related to ~~at least the~~ previously stored character and the particular character, and

wherein said processing system generates sound of the previously stored and the particular characters on the basis of sound data read by said external information reading circuitry.

15. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 13, wherein the characteristic data stored on the at least one of the collection cards includes ability data related at least to the previously stored character, and

said processing system changes a display state of the previously stored character in the video game based upon ability data read by said external information reading circuitry.

16. (currently amended) A video game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a video game program for animating and displaying at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on a video image display device, a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute ~~a~~ the video game program; and

external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, said characteristic data including ability data visually recognizably printed on said game card and hidden data not visually recognizably printed on said game card, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in a video game played on said video game machine to cause a visual change to a video image of an animated and displayed character dependent on progress of the execution of the video game program; and

the machine readable recording also including additional data including executable instructions to be added to the video game program, the executable instructions being readable by the external information reading circuitry and executable by the processing system of the video game machine.

17. (canceled).

18. (currently amended) A video game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a video game program for animating and displaying at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on a video image display device, a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute a video game program; and

external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, said characteristic data including ability data visually recognizably printed on said game card and hidden data not visually recognizably printed on said game card, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in a video game played on said video game machine to cause a visual change to a video image of an animated and displayed character dependent on progress of the execution of the video game program;

~~A game card according to claim 16,~~ wherein said game card further comprises additional data recorded thereon in addition to said characteristic data, the additional data including a mini-game program for playing a video game which may be added to the game based on the video game program stored in said video game information medium, and

wherein the mini-game program recorded on said game card records a mini-game program for realizing a mini-game in said game card separate from the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium, and

wherein said game card further comprises order data recorded thereon for rearranging parts of the mini-game program.

19. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein the characteristic data further includes at least sound data to generate a sound of the character, ability

data of the character, and amount data indicating an amount of the sound data and ability data.

20. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein the characteristic data further includes at least sound data for generating sound of the character, ability data representative of an ability of the character and text data explaining a feature of the character.

21. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, further including additional data corresponding to the identification code of the visually portrayed character and data for determining the amount of data recorded.

22. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the character visually portrayed on said game card, and

wherein said game card includes an optically readable recording of at least the identification data and characteristic data of the character comprising a two-dimensional array of dots.

23. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a reader for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the visually portrayed character, and

wherein said game card includes a non-volatile memory recording at least the identification data and characteristic data of the character.

24. (previously presented) A game card according to claim 16, wherein said external information reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the visually portrayed character, and

wherein said game card includes a magnetic memory provided in one surface thereof recording at least the identification data and characteristic data.

25.-27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game having animated graphics comprising:

a first game card for use in a card game, said game card visually portraying a figure of a first character and including recorded data relating to the first character,

a second game card visually portraying a figure of a second character and including recorded data relating to the second character;

a video game information storage medium including:

a memory storing a video game program for playing a video game related to said game card and initially storing data relating to the first character but not the second character, and

reading circuitry for reading information from said first and second game cards, the read information from the first card enabling a state of the first character to be changed, and the read information from the second card enabling animation and display of the second character visually portrayed on the second game card during play of the video game as a new character; and

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video game program.

29. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said video game information storage medium includes processing circuitry.

30. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said video game machine is a hand-held device and includes a display.

31. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, where at least one of said first and second game cards includes identification data of the character portrayed thereon and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character.

32. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said video game information storage medium includes, ~~for each of a plurality of~~ at least the first characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section that stores identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the video game.

33. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said ~~video game card is one of a plurality of trading~~ first and second game cards ~~each including a~~ respectively include figures of a the first and second characters differing in rarity value, ~~and~~
~~said video game machine uses said cards to play a video game associated with the game~~
~~program stored in said video game information storage medium.~~

34. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein the

data recorded on at least one of said first and second game cards includes sound data related to at least ~~an~~ its associated character, and

wherein said processing system generates sound of the associated character on the basis of sound data read by said reading circuitry.

35. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said data recorded on at least one of said first and second game cards includes text data explaining an individual feature of ~~the~~ its associated character, and

wherein said processing system displays text data read by said reading circuitry on a game screen.

36. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said first and second game cards optically readably records by a two-dimensional array of dots at least identification data and characteristic data of the ~~portrayed~~ first and second characters, respectively, and

wherein said reading circuitry comprises an optical reader for optically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the first and second characters recorded on said first and second game cards.

37. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said first and second game cards includes an electrically readable recording of at least of character identification data and characteristic data of the first and second characters in a non-volatile memory, respectively, and

wherein said reading circuitry comprises a reader for electrically reading the identification

data and characteristic data of the first and second characters stored in said non-volatile memory of said first and second game cards.

38. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 28, wherein said first and second game cards includes a magnetic recording of at least character identification data and characteristic data of the ~~associated~~ first and second characters, respectively, in a magnetic recording area formed in one surface thereof, and

wherein said reading circuitry comprises a magnetic reader for magnetically reading the identification data and characteristic data of the first and second characters recorded in the magnetic recording area of said first and second game cards.

39. (currently amended) A removable memory for a video game system comprising:
a program memory for storing a video game program involving cards;
a data reader for reading data from at least one card including data enabling animation and display of a new character during play of a video game provided by execution of the video game program and reading data from at least one other card including data enabling a characteristic of a character which has been previously stored by the program memory to be changed during play of the video game provided by execution of the video game program;

processing circuitry for processing data read from ~~a~~ the at least one card to animate and display the new character during play of the video game and processing data read from the at least one other card to change an animated and displayed characteristic of the previously stored character; and

a connector for connecting to a game machine having a processing system for executing said game program.

40. (previously presented) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a RAM memory.

41. (currently amended) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a groove for receiving at least a portion of said game card for reading data from said ~~game~~ said at least one card and said at least one other card.

42. (currently amended) A removable memory according to claim 39, further including a first game program memory section for storing a first program for playing a game to display animated characters in a video game, and
a second game program memory section for storing a second program for executing a game using ~~said~~ characteristic data to be added to the first game program when supplied with the identification code and characteristic data read from said at least one other card by the data reader to animate and display the previously stored character during play of a video game based on the read data.

43. (previously presented) A removable memory according to claim 42, wherein said removable memory comprises a cartridge including a semiconductor memory storing the first program and second program, and a case accommodating said semiconductor memory and integrally formed with said data reader.

44.-45. (canceled)

46. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein

said video game machine is a hand-held device and includes a display.

47. (canceled)

48. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein said video game information storage medium includes, for each of a plurality of the characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section that stores identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game.

49. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 13, wherein said collection cards each includes a figure of a character differing in rarity value.

50. (canceled)

51. (currently amended) A video game system for use with ~~at least one~~ a plurality of game cards each visually portraying a figure of a character and storing information in the form of a two dimensional array of dots comprising:

reading circuitry for reading the two dimensional array of dots from one of said game cards to enable animation and display of ~~the~~ a new character in video game play and reading the two dimensional array of dots from another one of said game cards to enable said game cards to enable a change in animation and display of another character;

a video game information storage medium including a memory storing a video game program for playing a game related to said at least said another one of the game cards and storing

data for animation and display of the another character prior to reading the two dimensional array of dots from said another one of the game cards, and

a processing system for executing a card related video game program, wherein at least a portion of said card related video game program is stored in said video game information storage medium, said processing system being operable to process video graphics image data embodied in said two-dimensional array of dots from said one of the game cards and said another one of the game cards to generate and display an animated the new character and change the another character for video game play.

52. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 51, wherein said reading circuitry and said video game information storage medium are housed in a removable cartridge.

53. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 51, wherein said processing system is a hand-held device and includes a display.

54. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51, where at least one of said game cards includes identification data of the character portrayed thereon and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character.

55. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51, wherein said one of the at least one game cards and said another one of the game cards respectively include ~~includes a plurality of trading cards including a figures of a characters~~ differing in rarity value, and

~~wherein said game system uses said cards to play a game associated with the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium.~~

56. (currently amended) A video game system according to claim 51, wherein ~~the~~ at least one of said game cards includes sound data related to at least an associated character, and wherein said processing system generates sound of the character on the basis of sound data read by said reading circuitry.

57. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game having animated graphics and for generating a display comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data including recorded data to enable animation and display of the character,

a video game information storage medium storing a game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute a video game program,

one of said plurality of game cards recording, for each of the characters depicted an associated character visually portrayed on said one of the plurality of game cards, at least identification data of the characters and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of an the associated character portrayed on said one of the plurality of game cards, said identification data and characteristic data of the associated character portrayed on said one of the plurality of game cards, when processed by said processing system, causing a change to a video image involving an animated and displayed associated character dependent upon the progress of said video game;

another one of said plurality of game cards recording, for a special associated character visually portrayed on said another one of said plurality of game cards, at least identification data and characteristic data of the special character portrayed on said another one of the plurality of game cards, said identification data and characteristic data of the special character, when processed by the processing system, adding a video image of the special character as a new character in the video game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards,

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from ~~one or more of said~~ one of and said another one of the game cards, processes the characteristic data to apply a change to said video image of an animated and displayed associated character as a result of processing the characteristic data of said one of the game cards and the video game program stored in said game information storage medium and to add the special character as a new character as a result of processing characteristic data of said another one of the game cards and the video game program stored in said game storage medium. ~~and~~

~~said processing system, when not supplied with the identification data and characteristic data by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards, executes a process on the basis of only the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium.~~

58. (currently amended) A video game system as in claim 1, wherein said game information storage medium includes, for each of the characters, a first memory section for

storing the identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game, and

said first storage section stores a registering program for writing and registering when the identification data of the character read by said external information reading circuitry is in a predetermined condition, the identification data and characteristic data being read from one of the game cards to said second storage section.

59. (currently amended) A video game system as in claim 1, wherein

said game information storage medium includes, for each of the plurality of characters, a first memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data, and a second memory section for storing identification data and characteristic data acquired during progress of the game,

said plurality of game cards having recorded thereon as characteristic data, data corresponding to the identification data of one or a plurality of the characters, and

said second storage section further storing, when the identification data of the character read by said external information reading circuitry is in a predetermined state, a program for registering additional data read out of one of the game cards in addition to the characteristic data corresponding to the identification data of the character.

60. (currently amended) A video game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a video game program for animating and displaying at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on a video image display device, a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute a video game program; and

external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and characteristic data related to said character, said characteristic data including ability data visually recognizably printed on said game card and hidden data not visually recognizably printed on said game card, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in a video game played on said video game machine to cause a visual change to a video image of an animated and displayed character dependent on progress of the execution of the video game program;

~~A game card as in claim 16~~

wherein said video game card ~~includes~~ also comprises a recording of additional data in addition to said characteristic data and the additional data includes a mini-game program for playing a game which may be added to the game based on the video game program stored in said video game information storage medium.

61. (currently amended) A game card for use in a video game system including a video game information storage medium storing a game program for generating at least some of the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on an image display device; a video game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information storage medium to execute a video game program; and an external information reading circuitry provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine

for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and
characteristic data related to said character, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said
external information reading circuitry and used in a video game played on said game machine,
and

wherein said game card is machine-readably recorded with image data for animating and
displaying a figure of the character, and said image data is read by said external information
reading circuitry from the game card thereby to animate and display the character's figure in a
game by said game machine; and

wherein at least a portion of a game program, to be added to the game program stored in
the information storage medium, is received via the external information reading circuitry as data
representing executable instructions stored as machine readable recorded data.

62. (currently amended) A game card for use in a video game system including a
video game information storage medium storing a game program for generating at least some of
the characters depicted on a plurality of such game cards on an image display device; a video
game machine including a processing system for receiving therein said video game information
storage medium to execute a video game program; and an external information reading circuitry
provided in one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine
for reading data recorded in said game card, said game card comprising:

a visually portrayed figure of a character for use in playing a card game,

a machine readable recording of at least an identification code of the character and

characteristic data related to said character, and

wherein said characteristic data is disposed on said card such that it can be read by said external information reading circuitry and used in a video game played on said game machine to control or change animation and display of the character play of the video game, and

wherein said game card includes, in a machine-readable manner, printed dots distributed within blocks each of which has a predetermined area, and by printing the dots with different distributions, at least the identification data and the character data are machine-readably recorded on said game card to control or change animation and display of the character play of the video game;

wherein the printed dots printed on the game card represent executable instructions of a game program to be added to the game program stored in the information storage medium.

63. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game and for generating a video game display having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video game program,

each of said plurality of game cards recording for an associated character depicted, at least identification data of the associated character and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character and for causing a change to a video image involving an animated and displayed associated character dependent on the progress of said video game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards; and

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards being operable to animate and display a video display visually portraying said associated character and for processing a video game program of the video game to cause the change to the video image involving said animated and displayed character by using said characteristic data;

~~A video game system as in claim 1 wherein said video game program stored in the video game information storage medium to be executed by the processing system of the video game machine~~ includes instructions obtained from at least one of said plurality of game cards ~~to be added to the video game program stored by the video game information storage medium.~~

64. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 63, wherein said external information reading circuitry is operable to read data from a two-dimensional dot array recorded on at least one of said plurality of game cards.

65. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game having animated graphics comprising:

a first game card for use in a card game, said first game card visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium including:

a memory storing a video game program for playing a video game related to said first game card, and

reading circuitry for reading information from said first game card, the read information enabling animation and display of the character visually portrayed on the first game card during play of the video game; and

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video game program;

~~A video game system as in claim 28,~~ wherein the first game card has encoded thereon a first set of program instructions for execution by said processing system.

66. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 65, wherein the video game system includes a second game card having graphical information thereon graphically depicting game related information and having encoded thereon a second set of program instructions for execution by said processing system, wherein at least said first game card and said second game card must be read by said reading circuitry to enable said processing system to execute said game program.

67. (currently amended) A video game system for playing a video game and for generating a video game display having animated graphics comprising:

a plurality of game cards for use in a card game, each visually portraying a figure of a character and including recorded data,

a video game information storage medium storing a video game program relating to game card character figures,

a video game machine including a processing system for removably receiving therein the video game information storage medium to execute the video game program,

each of said plurality of game cards recording for an associated character depicted, at

least identification data of the associated character and characteristic data relating to a characteristic of the associated character and for causing a change to a video image involving an animated and displayed associated character dependent on the progress of said video game;

wherein one of said video game information storage medium and said video game machine includes external information reading circuitry for reading the identification data and characteristic data of the characters recorded on said game cards; and

said processing system, when supplied with the identification data and characteristic data read by said external information reading circuitry from one or more of said game cards being operable to animate and display a video display visually portraying said associated character and for processing a video game program of the video game to cause the change to the video image involving said animated and displayed character by using said characteristic data;

~~A video game system as in claim 1, wherein~~

said external information reading circuitry reads recorded data from said plurality of game cards, the recorded data embodying program instructions, and

said processing system executes program instructions embodied by the recorded data read from each of said plurality of game cards.

68. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 67, wherein a storage device for storing a set of program instructions is embodied in a card reading module, and said processing system is embodied in a hand held housing, said card reading module being removably connectable to said hand-held housing.

69. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 67, wherein the video game system determines whether a sufficient number of game cards have been

read to execute instructions obtained from said plurality of game cards.

70. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 67 wherein the video game system rearranges the order of stored information read from said plurality of game cards.

71. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 67 wherein the recorded data read from said plurality of game cards includes program sequence data and the video game system rearranges the order of stored information read from said plurality of game cards based on the program sequence data.

72. (previously presented) A video game system according to claim 67 wherein the recorded data read from said plurality of game cards includes total program amount data and wherein the video game system determines whether a sufficient number of game cards have been read to execute instructions obtained from said plurality of game cards based on the total program amount data.

73. (new) A video game system according to claim 1, wherein the at least a portion of the video game program is obtained from more than one of the plurality of game cards.